In beginning this third module I first analyzed my current teaching and instruction using the CCT Performance Profile, specifically the section on Instruction for Active Learning. In doing so I learned that the use of technology within my classroom, specifically to aid and enhance my instruction was lacking and was currently being solely used as a teacher tool and not made available to enhance student learning. Consequently, in discussing this analysis with my mentor, it was decided that in completing this module my goal was to use technological and digital resources throughout the classroom to enhance and support daily learning. Throughout this module I will specifically target language and literacy development and learning activities.

I first began by eliciting the help of my mentor and together we brainstormed a list of possible ways to better incorporate technology within my classroom to enhance student language and literacy development. My mentor shared with me books that she had designed for her classroom using digital photos highlighting a variety of concepts and activities. I learned from my mentor the process of making each book, starting with either identifying a concept which needed to be taught to a group of children and taking real life digital photos representing this concept or photographing an event taking place within the school and/or classroom. An example provided was photographing a cooking experience or classroom visitors such as the firefighters and fire truck visit. From there she showed me how she would add text to each book to appropriately depict each photograph then add a cover page, laminate and bind. We talked about different ways these books could be used: as a read aloud, in the library center where students could read them together

and discuss them, or used in a small group to appropriately teach concepts to specific groups of children.

In really liking this idea I adopted her idea into my own classroom and began creating homemade books using digital photos to enhance my teaching. Using what I had learned from my mentor I further tweaked her ideas and made adaptations as I went along to better enhance my instruction and educational goals for the children in my classroom. The first book I created was one highlighting children's creations in the block area. I would take pictures of structures that children had built throughout the day. Once uploaded to the computer I would call that child over and rather than having myself annotate the picture I would engage the child in describing their building and turn it into a language rich experience for the child. I was able to work exclusively with each child, meeting their individual language needs and used scaffolding and additional questioning to promote a richer language experience and greater conversational exchange. After the book was completed (even though I have added to this book on a continuous basis and don't consider it complete) it was introduced to the children during a whole group read aloud and then offered to the children in the block area as a part of their center time play. This book in particular not only provided language rich experiences between children as they shared their story and recapped their constructions and buildings with each other, but it also was used as a teaching tool to provide students with ideas for block constructions based on their peer's pictures and buildings. Not only

was their language brought to a higher level, but so was their level of block building and construction.

I created additional books highlighting our visit from the firefighters during fire prevention, a book on directional and color concepts using pictures of the children outside on the playground. I also began a series of these books that I sent home with children to enjoy with their parents which came equipped with directions for enjoying together and different concepts throughout the book highlighted to promote additional discussion and a language rich experience within the home.

In working with a high population of ELL children within my classroom this year I also began using digital pictures to create flash cards, matching games as well as vocabulary book to help them learn the English language. Rather than using generic clipart pictures, my mentor and I discussed the effectiveness of using actual photographs within the classroom allowing these students to make greater connections to the word and concept in English. I began with pictures that were needed routinely throughout the day: the bathroom, sink to wash hands, backpack and cubby, the playground, the bus, as well as the different centers throughout the room. As I saw the need to create additional cards based on student interest and need I was able to do so on the spot by utilizing the classroom digital camera. I provided these for my literacy tutor to use with these children in small groups but then also used the pictures throughout the day continuously with the spoken word. For example during our routine to get ready for lunch and instructing a child to go

wash their hands, I would show them the picture of the sink to promote greater understanding of what was spoken. Per suggestion of a colleague I also began to leave these cards in a basket that were available to my ELL students. When there was a time in which they were requesting something and I wasn't able to understand them, I could offer them the basket of cards and let them show me what it is that they wanted. I quickly found that this classroom tool became very beneficial to both myself and my students learning English. Not only did I find that their English vocabularies were quickly increasing, but levels of frustration decreased as when there was a moment when either party could not understand what the other was trying to communicate orally there was a visual backup and a planned system to aid in the conversational exchange.

In looking at other ways to incorporate technology into my literacy instruction within the classroom my mentor and I discussed adding a listening center to my classroom. Here students could independently listen to books and broaden their understanding of print conventions and story elements. Books that support the classroom theme as well as books already read and discussed during a shared reading could be added to reinforce concepts already taught and discussed at an independent level for the child. I instantly initiated this in my classroom using a variety of books on CD and compact personal CD players with headphones. I set out ground rules for use of the CD players and then offered them as choices during center time. Children instantly flocked to the area all wanting to partake. I was elated to see books in their hands and them appropriately interacting with the text.

As time went on I added different story props and manipulatives to the center coinciding with the book on CD. These were often books and activities that were already taught in a whole group shared reading lesson so students already had exposure to them. Now they were able to independently reinforce and relearn what was already taught. In doing this within my classroom I was finding that not only did student engagement in books and stories skyrocket, but their understanding of stories, specifically those taught as a shared reading lesson then added to the listening center was greater than just being exposed to the shared reading lesson alone. Students were able to retell the story with greater detail as well as answer wh- questions about story elements with greater accuracy. Using this piece of technology within the classroom was certainly aiding in my instruction and enriching my students' learning within the classroom.

In final, while completing this module I also worked to compile a list of websites that could support language and literacy development within the classroom. I wanted to find sites that were preschool appropriate and ones in which the children could navigate somewhat independently. I talked with colleagues about this and solicited their advice and from my graduate class I also was introduced to handful of other websites. Some of the sites that I was introduced to were:

www.teachertube.com - an educational version of YouTube in which all videos are screened for appropriateness

www.tumblebooks.com - an interactive website in which students can watch and listen to a variety of storybooks

www.startfall.com - a phonics based website allowing children to their reinforce

phonics and phonemic awareness learning

www.storylineonline.net - an online streaming video program that features

members of the Screen Actors Guild reading a variety of children's books

I have begun to use these four websites frequently in my classroom. Children are

able to use the student computer to work through one of these websites as a center

choice. While I do not rely on these websites to teach, I do find myself using them as

reinforcements to topics and lessons already learned as well as additional exposure

to a variety of literacy skills. Additionally, I have used www.teachertube.com for

many of my ELL students to reinforce concepts. I am able to pull up videos

highlighting a concept and share it with students. For example when recently

teaching and learning about turkeys, I was able to pull up a video and show my

students what real turkeys looked and sounded like. For many children they had

never been exposed to a real turkey so by being able to do this it made the concept

much more meaningful.

Upon completion of this module I feel confident in saying that by incorporating a

variety of forms of technology within my classroom I have enhance my daily

teaching and instruction. I am now using my digital camera to create a variety of

homemade books that provide language rich experiences for children as they

annotate the pictures and discuss the contents of each book. With the digital camera

I am also creating a variety of visual supports to be used by a variety of ELL students

acquiring the English language. Additionally I have added a listening center to my

classroom in which students are independently able to listen to a book on CD reinforcing an earlier shared reading lesson. This has enabled children to revisit and relearn material already taught independently as a center choice. In final I have learned about a handful of websites that are not only preschool appropriate but can be used within my classroom to reinforce language and early literacy skills. By implementing these activities in my classroom, my student's language and literacy skills have been reinforced and as I continue to use technology to support my teaching and children's learning I anticipate my students to continue to benefit positively.